Deadline for pollution control standards

1893. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have set a deadline for several industries in the critical sector to meet the pollution control standards falling which they face closure after December, 1991;

(b) if so, the names of such industries, State-wise, and the details of action taken so far in this regard; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the time limit set is inadequate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The State Governments have been asked to identify the defaulting units, taking into account the adequacy of the time-limit.

Forest cover in Andhra Pradesh

1894. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total forest cover in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take to increase the forest area in that State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) According to the State Forest Report, 1989, the actual forest cover of Andhra Pradesh is 47911 sq. Kms.

(b) Massive afforestation programme is being implemented under the 20 point programme.

Illegal trafficking of banned animal products

1895. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing incidents of illegal trafficking of banned animal products from India; and

(b) if so, the steps Government have taken for the protection of wild animals and checking illegal trafficking of animal products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) Following steps have been taken for the protection of wild animals and prevention of illegal trafficking of animal products:—

(i) Hunting of all the wild animals except for protection of life and property and for the purpose of research, education and management of population, has been banned under the provisions of Wild Life (Protection) Act. the Wild Life (Protection) Act, been amended to suitably enhance the penalties and punishment for various offences relating to poaching and illegal trade.

(ii) A network of national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and biosphere reserve has been set up to provide protection to the wildlife. Government of India is providing Central Assistance to State Governments for development of such parks and sanctuaries.

(iii) International and internal trade in products from rare and endangered species of wildlife has been banned. Regional offices for Wildlife Preservation are involved with regulation and control of trade in wildlife products.

(iv) Anti-poaching infrastructure in the states has been strengthened. Government of India provides assistance to State Governments for strengthening

the anti-poaching infrastructure under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Control of Poaching and Illegal Trade in Wildlife".

(v) Co-operation of Border Security Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police and Army has been sought for conservation of wildlife in border areas.

(vi) Wildlife Institute of India is providing training to officials in Wildlife Management.

(vii) Research on various aspects of wildlife management has been taken up.

(viii) State Government have been requested to ban felling of trees in the hills, above the altitude of 1,000 metres.

(ix) World Wildlife Fund (India) has recently started a wildlife trade monitoring Unit i.e. TRAFFIC INDIA. This will help in minimising illegal trafficking in wildlife products.

Moratorium on exploitation of forests

1896. KUMARI CHANDRIKA PREMJI KENIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to place a moratorium on commercial exploitation of forest in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) The national Forest Policy 1988 does not provide for total ban on cutting of trees. However, it enjoins that no forest should be permitted to be worked without the Government having approved the Management Plan and that derivation of direct economic benefit from the forests should be subordinated to the importance of forests for environmental stability and ecological balance.

Air pollution

1897. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the air pollution in mist of the cities particularly in the Capital has risen to poisonous level;

(b) if so, to what extent the air of the Metropolitan cities including Delhi is polluted;

(c) what is the ratio of dust and smoke in polluting the air; and

(d) what remedial action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) According to the air quality survey, air pollution levels in cities are, by and large, within the prescribed limits and continue to remain so. While the levels of sulphur dioxides and oxides of nitrogen are well within the limits, particulate matter in these cities is on the higher side. This is mainly due to the presence of dust and high density of vehicular traffic. This is also true for Delhi.

(b) and (c) The range of the annual averages for metropolitan cities, including Delhi, from the latest available data of the criteria pollutants monitored, are from 5 to 49 micrograms per cubic meter (ug/m3) for sulphur dioxide, from 11 to 30 ug/m3 for nitrogen dioxide and 88 to 510 ug/mg3 for particulate matter.

(d) The steps taken by the Government to control pollution in metropolitan cities include the following:

(1) Effluent and emission standards have been prescribed for industries under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986;

(2) Ambient air quality standards have been evolved;

(3) A network of ambient air and water quality monitoring stations has been set up;